

Church Newsround – November 2008

BISHOP'S LETTER

Trust me – I'm a Bishop

There are many possible responses to this plea, ranging from: "You must be joking – I did that once and I won't make that mistake again", to "Of course I will because being trustworthy is part of what being a Bishop is all about".

Probably most people will position themselves somewhere between these extremes of pathological suspicion and unconditional confidence when it comes to trusting Bishops – or anyone else for that matter.

But why is trust so important? Well, the whole of our Banking system depends on it and recent events have raised all sorts of questions about the extent to which money-marketers can be trusted to deliver efficient and fair economic outcomes without strict regulation. Demands for regulation imply increasing erosion of trust, so trust matters.

So, what is trust? The very word has the gift of warming the heart and casting out fear. It is a feel-good word, but we note that it is rarely unconditional. It makes assumptions about the reliability and benevolence of other people which we are seldom prepared to concede without putting in place some fail-safe provisions lest our assumptions prove to be misplaced. This is because, human nature being what it is, individuals will tend to pursue their own interests. Co-operation cannot be assumed.

Yet we do continue to trust other people even when this would appear to be rather risky in a climate of self-centredness and greed. This commitment to go on trusting people may be purely pragmatic – how could a modern economy, democracy or Church continue to operate without some degree of trust being conceded? However, it may be attributable to something much more fundamental about what it means to be human.

We live in relationship with one another and where there is no trust, there can be no relationship. Trust is fundamental to life in community, and it is fundamental to what we call faithfulness. Faith is a disposition of the mind and will to entrust oneself and one's interests to the reliability and benevolence of another. When that "other" is God, then faith is the ultimate expression of trust and it is our faith in the unconditional trustworthiness of God which enables us to entrust ourselves to others in the sure and certain hope that, even if that trust does prove to be misplaced, underneath are the everlasting arms.

Trust me, I'm a Bishop – but only if you trust God even more.

+ John Lincoln

Parish registers

Baptisms

Welcome to the Church

Lucy Christina Jenner

Toby Samuel Jenner

Poppy Rose Purbrick

Weddings

We pray for those starting married life together.

4.10.08 Alicia Harpum & Stephen Reader

Funerals

We thank God for the lives of those who have died

Andrew Jackson Brookes Died 12.10.08 Funeral 24.10.08.

WORSHIP IN THE PARISHES FOR NOVEMBER 2008

2nd November

St Peter
St Wilfrid

All Saints Sunday

9.00 am Holy Communion with Baptism
8.00 am Holy Communion
10.30 am Morning Worship

3rd November

St. Wilfrid

All Souls Day

7.30pm Commemoration of the faithful departed

9th November

St Oswald
St Peter
St Wilfrid

Remembrance Sunday

9.00 am Holy Communion
10.45 am Morning Worship for Remembrance Sunday
8.00 am Holy Communion
10.00 am Service at St. Wilfrid's processing to
War Memorial for 11.00am Act of Remembrance (note – no
crèche)

16th November

St Peter
St Wilfrid

2nd Sunday before Advent

9.00 am Holy Communion
8.00 am Holy Communion
10.30 am Morning Worship

23rd November

St Oswald
St Wilfrid

Christ the King

9.00 am Morning Prayer followed by Holy Communion
10.30 am Holy Communion with Sunday School /Crèche

27th November

St. Peter

Thursday - (to be confirmed)

2.15 pm Dunston School and Family Worship

30th November

St Wilfrid's

Advent Sunday

10.30 am Group Service Holy Communion with Baptism

There is a Holy Communion Service at 9.00am every Thursday Morning
at St Wilfrid's Church in Metheringham

For your prayers;

Monday 17th November

Hugh of Lincoln (Bishop)

Thank you

To all those who helped with the Feast Refreshments and the Flowers in St Wilfrid's.
£231.45 was raised.

Something to look forward to !

Note for your Diary - St Oswald's Carol Service Sunday 21st December at 4.30 pm.
Coffee and mince pies afterwards.

Dunston Parish News

As the autumn moves on it seems a good time to share with you our plans to hold a Christmas tree festival the weekend of 5th/6th/7th December. There will be a 'big Christmas tree' in the churchyard and we hope you will join us when the Silver Sounds Band will be leading carols and the lighting of the tree on the evening of Friday 6th. There will be seasonal refreshments too. The tree lights can be sponsored in memory of a loved one or in celebration of an event etc and details will be coming through your door on a flyer very soon. St Peters will be open for 'tree viewing' Saturday and Sunday afternoons and there will be the refreshments, games and carols to enjoy. Entry is free so please come along and support this village event. Should you wish to sponsor, donate or dress a tree please contact Sue or myself. We are always delighted to hear from you. Trees can be any size and the possibilities of themes are endless. We know the village will rise to the challenge and put on a first class event following the success of the scarecrow weekend which is still being discussed the length of the county!

Again this year we will be celebrating advent and the Posada nativity figures will be travelling around the village. If you would like to participate please contact Sue or sign up to the rota in church.

November 9th 10.45am
Remembrance Service
St Peters

Always a warm welcome at St Peters.

KH

Dunston School

First of all, I must say how much I enjoyed the Scarecrow Weekend in Dunston. The atmosphere in the village was wonderful, everywhere you looked people were smiling. Well done to everyone who helped organise and run this superb event. We are looking forward to next year already!

Our building work at the front of the school has been delayed but we are hopeful that work will start soon.

On September 16th we had our Section 48 Church Schools Inspection. The resulting report was very positive indeed. There are many very pleasing comments such as: "the school's Christian ethos permeates school life" and "attitudes to collective worship are outstanding with learners' enjoyment being immediately apparent". If you would like a copy of the report, please contact the school.

Finally, you are most welcome to come and join the children in an act of worship at St. Peter's Church at 2.15pm on Thursday, October 23rd. This will be the first of our new monthly services in the church. See you there!

Graham Boyall
Headteacher

Metheringham W.I.

The meeting held on the 15th October was a craft Evening led by some of our members.

At the Make & Bake & Show held at Great Hale Meth WI came 4th out of a field of 27. Jean Simpson and Coral Earney won cups for Embroidery and Photography respectively. The Cooperative Effort – Flower Arrangement, Cake and Card - came 3rd. Obviously there were many skills to choose from.

Thank you to Audrey Webb for Tea-bag Folding. (Squares of patterned paper folded to make rosettes, butterflies etc to stick on a card to produce your own cards.

A miniature Origami !)

Jean Simpson for her Canvas Stitching. This was very intricate work. Cross Stitch patterns using sewing silks.

Moira Sturdy for Marzipan Fruits (Petit Fours) Edible Plasticine !

Jayne Palmer for Knotting Techniques. Two pieces of fabric folded together, cut round the edges. The edges were then tied together to make a fringe.

A very satisfying evening all round.

Next Meeting Village Hall November 19th. Visitors and New members always welcome.

JS

Marriage

HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHO TO MARRY?

-You got to find somebody who likes the same stuff. Like, if you like sports, she should like it that you like sports.

-- Alan, age 10

-No person really decides before they grow up who they're going to marry. God decides it all way before, and you get to find out later who you're stuck with.

-- Kristen, age 10

2. WHAT IS THE RIGHT AGE TO GET MARRIED?

Twenty-three is the best age because you know the person FOREVER by then.

-- Camille, age 10

3. HOW CAN A STRANGER TELL IF TWO PEOPLE ARE MARRIED?

You might have to guess, based on whether they seem to be yelling at the same children.

-- Derrick, age 8

4. WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR MUM AND DAD HAVE IN COMMON?

Both don't want any more children.

-- Lori, age 8

5. WHAT DO MOST PEOPLE DO ON A DATE?

-Dates are for having fun, and people should use them to get to know each other. Even boys have something to say if you listen long enough.

-- Lynnette, age 8 (isn't she a treasure)

-On the first date, they just tell each other lies and that usually gets them interested enough to go for a second date.

-- Martin, age 10

6. WHEN IS IT OKAY TO KISS SOMEONE?

-When they're rich.

-- Pam, age 7 (very smart girl)

-The law says you have to be eighteen, so I wouldn't want to mess with that.

- - Curt, age 7

-The rule goes like this: If you kiss someone, then you should marry them and have children with them. It's the right thing to do.

-- Howard, age 8

7. IS IT BETTER TO BE SINGLE OR MARRIED?

It's better for girls to be single but not for boys. Boys need someone to clean up after them. -- Anita, age 9 (bless you child)

8. HOW WOULD THE WORLD BE DIFFERENT IF PEOPLE DIDN'T GET MARRIED?

There sure would be a lot of kids to explain, wouldn't there?

-- Kelvin, age 8

And the number 1 Favourite is

9. HOW WOULD YOU MAKE A MARRIAGE WORK?

Tell your wife that she looks pretty, even if she looks like a dump truck . - Ricky, age 10 .

CPH

Church of England marks Darwin's contribution to science as bicentenary approaches

The Church of England has developed a new section of its website to mark the approaching bicentenary of Charles Darwin's birth in 1809, and the 150th anniversary of the publication of 'On the Origin of Species' in 1859.

As people's interest grows in the bicentenary, the pages analyse Darwin's faith and his relationship with the Church of England.

In the new section, Darwin and the Church reveals that Darwin was surrounded by the influence of the Church his entire life. Having attended a Church of England boarding school in Shrewsbury, he trained to be a clergyman in Cambridge; was inspired to follow his calling into science by another clergyman who lived and breathed botany; and married into a staunch Anglican family.

However, Darwin and Faith shows, quoting Darwin's own words, how he slowly lost his personal Christian faith, the erosion made complete by a need for evidence, and the sad death of a beloved daughter.

It is this need for humans to think, and love, that forms the centrepiece of the essay by the Revd Dr Malcolm Brown, called 'Good Religion Needs Good Science'.

After warning of the social misapplication of Darwin's discoveries, where natural selection justifies racism and other forms of discrimination - perhaps predicted in the "misguided" over-reaction of the Church in the 1860s - Malcolm Brown writes: "Christians will want to stress, instead, the human capacity for love, for altruism, and for self-sacrifice."

He separates biological science and human emotions further by pointing out the naivety of assuming a wholesale evolution of the human race: "... even a fairly cursory review of human history undermines any idea of constant moral progress."

The website section 'On the Origin of Darwin' is online at www.cofe.anglican.org/darwin PP

Statistic of the month: Infant baptism is still popular

Two babies in every five in the UK are baptised. Despite the fact that young people are less and less in church, nevertheless 40% of those newly born are brought to a church for infant baptism or christening.

The percentage has declined – it was 55% in 1991 and 50% in 2000, but in 2008 it was still high – at 40%. These percentages include all those babies baptised in the Church of England (and other Anglican churches in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland), the Roman Catholic Churches in each country, the Methodist church and the smaller denominations, some of which also practice infant baptism. The number of baptisms in the Roman Catholic Church is increasing because of the large number of Polish immigrants who have come to the UK to find work, and Catholic baptisms are more than a third, 36%, of the overall total.

Why do people have their babies baptised? The percentage doing so is about three times greater than the number who come to church even once a year, let alone once a week. Some see it as a sort of 'insurance' policy – "I feed my child, I house my child, I get injections for my child, why shouldn't I have it baptised?" as a Scottish lady (who believed in God but never went to church – apart from these occasions) once said.

Most baptisms are accompanied by other friends as well, and often with God-parents. How can we make these occasions special in our church? How can we keep in touch with the families of those who have been baptised, and encourage them to bring their babies to crèche and toddlers to Sunday School? How can we help all those who attend to see something of what the Christian faith is all about, and encourage them to seek the truth for themselves?

The Catholics baptise children with oil as well as water, which is a lovely symbol of praying that the Holy Spirit may come upon each child. They also give a lighted candle to each parent, helping to make the occasion especially meaningful. Baptisms are such an opportunity – it is worth considering: how can we best use them? PP

All Souls' Day

The early Church was slow to dedicate a liturgical day to offering prayers and masses to commemorate the faithful departed. But in time prayers were offered on behalf of dead monks, that they might attain "the Beatific Vision" through purification, which the Church later described as Purgatory. Odilo, the powerful abbot of Cluny, (d 1049) decreed that All Souls' Day should follow the feast of All Saints' Day.

At least four ancient English dedications are known, the most famous of which are All Souls College, Oxford and the church in Langham Place in London.

In bygone centuries All Souls' day was certainly uncomfortable for anyone who had wronged a person who had then died. For it was believed that souls in purgatory could appear on earth on this day, in the form of ghosts, witches or toads, to haunt anyone who had wronged them in life.

On a more cheerful note, it was also believed that you could help the dead on this day by almsgiving in cash or in kind. Some of these beliefs seem to have been caught up in the popular customs of Halloween.

When the Reformation came, the Protestants disregarded the idea of Purgatory, and this feast day remained with the Roman Catholic Church. PP

Christian Basics: What on earth, is the Church?

'The local church is the hope of the world' (Bill Hybels). Our experience of church can be disappointing or frustrating; yet we must not lose this vision of God's purpose for the church. The New Testament offers us a number of pictures to explore this purpose:

1. The People of God

The New Testament word for 'church' is ekklesia, which describes an assembly of people. This makes the point that church is not essentially buildings or services, but a community of people belonging to God and committed to sharing his love in the world. 'But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light' (1 Peter 2:9). With people increasingly experiencing 'belonging before believing', it is vital to provide, both a congregational experience and small groups in our church life.

2. The Body of Christ

The church is Christ's body on earth, 'The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ' (1 Cor 12:12). While every Christian has a vital part to play in the life and growth of the body, Paul warns us (1 Cor. 12) about the wrong attitudes that will stop the body from working effectively. We have to avoid both feelings of inferiority (i.e. 'I have

nothing to offer') or superiority (i.e. 'I don't need you'). We all have a unique contribution to make, using our different gifts, experience and perspective.

3. A Holy Temple

The church is also described as a holy temple, the expression of God's presence on earth 'You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ' (1 Peter 2:5). As living stones, unlike bricks, we don't uniformly fit together. Instead, like in a dry stone wall, we are hand selected and shaped in order to fit with each other. The church is a place where our lives are shaped to be increasingly more like Jesus, as the edges are knocked off through our relationships with others. This is why our experience of church is sometimes painful; however let's not forget that God is still committed to work through his church to bring hope to our world!

The Rev Richard Bewes considers war...How can Christians justify the use of force?

Have you ever wondered how people of peace, like Christians, can contemplate the use of force?

Certainly the violence of these opening years of the 21st century is staggering. Terrorist activity and military conflict worldwide – the resulting loss of life can never, ever, be things of which the human race can be proud. No wonder such mayhem causes us distress – and this distress should ideally drive us to prayer.

As for what Christians should do, here are some questions to consider:-

1. Do we believe in the validity of punishment?

The answer, surely, must be Yes – if there is such a thing as objective truth and a given morality by which human life is ordered. If this were not so, we would have to remove from our vocabulary such words as 'reward', 'merit', 'justice' and even 'forgiveness'.

Punishment is not a popular word in circles that dislike the language of retribution, and who speak rather of 'corrective punishment'. However, St Paul said secular authority is "God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer." (Romans 13:4, NIV). So the treatment of wrongdoing must have a retributive element in it, if it is ever to be corrective.

2. Is there a difference between force and violence?

The use of force is the disciplinary exercise of lawful authority – as seen, for example, in a well-run police force. This is a valid part of God's order. St Paul said: "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities...he who rebels is rebelling against what God has instituted..." (Romans 13:1,2 NIV)
Of course 'force' can become 'violence' under a repressive authority. Revelation 13:5-8 depicts such authorities as a blasphemous "beast". Then the call can indeed be for civil disobedience. The earliest Trades Unions themselves were begun through Christian influence!

3. Do we assent to the depravity of the human heart?

People are selfish. We can't be trusted to behave well towards others. So our societies need to agree rules for our order and survival. Without such restraints, and the power to apply them, chaos and anarchy are the result.
A Christian is called to shun all violence, but to also be committed to the disciplined use of force. Sadly, a lot of muddled thinking takes place (especially during times of international conflict) when the debate fails to take account of the difference between violence and force.
Force is concerned with the upholding of law. Violence is concerned with the overthrow of law. PP

Hand-written on the wall of Mother Theresa's room

People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centred;
Forgive them anyway.
If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives;
Be kind anyway.
If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies;
Be successful anyway.
If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you;
Be honest and frank anyway.
What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight;
Build anyway.
If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous;
Be happy anyway.
The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;
Do good anyway.
Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;
Give the world the best you've got anyway.
You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God;
It never was between you and them anyway. PP

Why a short nap is good for your brain

Nodding off, if only for 10 minutes, is good for you. It refreshes the brain and improves the memory. In fact, it is the act of falling asleep more than being asleep that is so beneficial.

Recent research from the University of Düsseldorf has found that just before sleep, the brain 'replays' recent events, producing dreamlike sensations and 'crazy' thoughts which could explain the benefit of a power nap. "It's as if the brain is sifting through new material to figure out what to work with," said one researcher. And it is this short period of 'thought marshalling', rather than prolonged sleep, which may be crucial for good recall. PP

I feel much better now I know that – Ed

Operation Christmas Child

It's time for Operation Christmas Child again – the deadline for shoe boxes is 18 November. If you visit the website, <http://www.operationchristmaschild.org.uk/pages/where-take-your-boxes> you can easily find your nearest drop-off point. If there is someone in your church who would like to take the boxes to the warehouse, you might like to include their name and contact number in the article below. It's time to pack your shoe box!

There's a needy child somewhere in Eastern Europe or Africa who will celebrate Christmas this year – only because of YOU. He or she may be in hospital, an orphanage, an Internally Displaced Persons Camp, a homeless shelter, or an impoverished neighbourhood. The parents have no money to buy presents – just surviving their daily life is hard enough.

Yes, it is time for the 2008 Operation Christmas Child. Last year the people of the UK sent out a staggering 1.3 MILLION shoe boxes. They were packed by caring individuals, families, churches, schools, businesses, and other organisations.

Operation Christmas Child is the world's largest Christmas shoe box appeal . Since 1990 the project has brought the joy of Christmas to more than 60 million boys and girls throughout the world.

If you would like to send a shoe box of small toys and gifts to a needy child, please contact....in our church, or visit the OCC website at: <http://www.operationchristmaschild.org.uk/pages/where-take-your-boxes> to find out where your nearest drop-off point is. This year the deadline for getting your shoe box to the warehouse is 18th November. PP

2008 is the 90th anniversary of the end of the First World War, so you may like to consider this famous poem.

During World War One, some of the worst fighting took place in the Flanders and Picardy regions of Belgium and Northern France. After the complete devastation, the poppy was the only thing which grew on the land. McCrae, a doctor serving there with the Canadian Armed Forces, was deeply inspired and moved by what he saw. He wrote these now famous verses:

In Flanders' Fields
John McCrae, 1915

In Flanders' fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place: and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly

Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders' fields.
Take up our quarrel with the foe;
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high,
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders' Fields.

PP